

MAY 3 1961



Q. and A.

DORIS FLEESON

STATINTL

Washington.

President Kennedy is to be spared for the present a public post-mortem on Cuba. Influential Senators and editorial opinion are paving the way for him to withdraw from his exposed Laos position to the safer and higher ground of the United Nations.

The inquiry he cannot postpone or evade is the inquiry into his own mind and heart when he made his decision to approve the ill-fated Cuban refugee landings. Washington is full of rumors about which advisers were for or against. Able reporters are engaged full time on blow-by-blow accounts of the weeks and months preceding the disastrous events of April.

The record is growing. How the President came to make his faulty Cuban judgment cannot long be secret.

* * *

The Morse subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has heard Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Central Intelligence Agency Director Allen Dulles. Most of the full committee attended, and while their comments are cautious, the impression seeps out that Rusk cut an unimpressive figure and that Dulles is past his time.

Before the committee now are demands by members that the Joint Chiefs of Staff be heard, if need be in conjunction with the Senate Armed Services Committee. Already it is appearing that the Pentagon had furnished the muscle of the pro-invasion advice given to the President.

United Nations Ambassador Adlai Stevenson learned of the plans for the invasion from White House special assistant McGeorge Bundy only

after it was under way. Under Secretary of State Chester Bowles, who is planning an economic war on Communist subversion of Latin America, was bypassed completely. Apparently it was realized that he would not approve and would be hampered in his own project if he did.

Chairman J. William Fulbright of Foreign Relations was not asked his opinion but presented to Kennedy a strong protest in writing and then in person.

But when this and further advices about the parts played by important individuals are known, the heart of the matter remains with the person of the President. It is in no sense an apology for him to say that he acted out of character in the Cuban venture, at least out of his character as it appeared to the many reporters who spent so many months in close contact with him during his primary, convention and election battles.

* * *

Kennedy knows all the answers the Senators and reporters are seeking today. He knows who said what to him, who foresaw the damaging results of failure and who insisted much could be accomplished.

The President has never seemed to be impulsive. He is in many ways a golden boy to whom the good things come easily, but he has shown patience and a willingness to take time to achieve his aims. He has been cool and dispassionate, almost incredibly unemotional, in very emotional matters.

What then tipped the balance, or who tipped it, and what in Kennedy responded? Only he can answer, and that answer is of the very first importance as he marches down the road of Presidential responsibility.